

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 04433 081852Z
ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 SSO-00 /016 W
-----081854Z 119289 /41

O 081813Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 596

CONFIDENTIAL MADRID 4433

FOR UNDER SECRETARY BENSON ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SP, OVIP (BENSON, LUCY WILSON)
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT BY UNDER SECRETARY BENSON

REF: STATE 131427

1. I WAS DELIGHTED TO LEARN OF YOUR PROPOSAL TO
VISIT MADRID, A POSSIBILITY WE HAD DISCUSSED WHEN
I HAD THE PLEASURE OF MEETING YOU IN MARCH.

2. I APPRECIATE YOUR REQUEST FOR MY CANDID ADVICE
ON SUCH A VISIT AT THIS TIME. AS YOU KNOW, THE
FIRST PARLAMENTARY ELECTIONS ARE TAKING PLACE ON
JUNE 15 AND I AM NOT AT ALL SURE HOW LONG IT WILL BE
AFTER THE ELECTIONS BEFORE A NEW GOVERNMENT, BOTH OF
THE CABINET AND SUB-CABINET LEVELS, WILL ASSUME OFFICE.
EVEN ASSUMING THAT MOST OF THE KEY SENIOR OFFICIALS
WOULD HAVE BEEN NAMED BY JULY 1, WE CAN NOT EXPECT
THEM TO BE WELL READ INTO THEIR JOBS AND IT WOULD
SEEM TO ME THAT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR YOU TO
CALL ON THE SPANIARDS AT BOTH THE CABINET AND SUB-CABINET
LEVEL.

3. THERE IS NO STRUCTURE IN SPAIN FOR HANDLING SECURITY
ASSISTANCE AND MILITARY SALES MATTERS COMPARABLE TO OURS.

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ONE KEY OFFICIAL IN THE SPANISH SYSTEM INVOLVED IN SUCH
MATTERS IS THE CHIEF OF THE HIGH GENERAL STAFF. HOWEVER,
WITH THE DEATH OF THE PREVIOUS INCUMBENT THAT POSITION
HAS BEEN VACANT SINCE THE LATTER PART OF APRIL AND WILL
NOT BE FILLED UNTIL SOME UNSPECIFIED TIME FOLLOWING THE
ELECTIONS WHEN A NEW GOVERNMENT IS IN OFFICE. QUITE
FRANKLY, THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE HIGH GENERAL STAFF IS

NOT A PERSON YOU WOULD FIND PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO WALK
WITH.

4. I UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE YOUR DESIRE TO HAVE A
LOW VISIBILITY VISIT. HOWEVER I AM NOT SURE THAT WE
WOULD BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THIS SINCE U.S. POLICY ON
SECURITY ASSISTANCE IS A MATTER OF GREAT INTEREST TO
THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND ONE WHICH CONTINUES TO RECEIVE
CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN THE SPANISH MEDIA. THUS YOUR
MEETINGS WITH SPANISH OFFICIALS WOULD INEVITABLY BECOME
"NEWS."

5. I WOULD ALSO ADD THAT THE QUESTION ABOUT "WHAT"
YOU COULD APPROPRIATELY VISIT DURING SUCH A STAY
IS SOMEWHAT COMPLEX SINCE MUCH OF THE EQUIPMENT PROVIDED
UNDER THE PREVIOUS MAP PROGRAM IS SOMEWHAT DISPERSED
AMONGST SPANISH MILITARY UNITS. AS FAR AS I KNOW THE
SPANISH DO NOT YET PHYSICALLY HAVE IN PLACE ANYTHING OF
SIGNIFICANCE UNDER THE TERMS OF THE 1976 TREATY.

6. IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, YOU MIGHT
FIND IT A MORE PROFITABLE USE OF YOUR OWN TIME TO PLAN
A VISIT TO MADRID AT A LATER DATE WHEN AT LEAST WE HAVE
A GOVERNMENT IN PLACE. HOWEVER, SHOULD YOU STILL BELIEVE
THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A VISIT AT THIS TIME TO
MADRID, YOU WILL OF COURSE BE MOST WELCOME AND WE WOULD
PROVIDE YOU WITH THE FULLEST POSSIBLE BRIEFING WITHIN
THE MISSION ON FRIDAY, JULY 1. WE WOULD ALSO ENDEAVOR
TO MAKE WHATEVER OUTSIDE APPOINTMENTS WE COULD WHICH MIGHT
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SEEM PROFITABLE. I WOULD ONLY ADD THAT OBTAINING SATURDAY
APPOINTMENTS WITH SUCH SENIOR SPANISH OFFICIALS AS MAY BE
AVAILABLE IS NOT ALWAYS EASY.

7. IF NOT NOW, THEN LATER, I DO STRONGLY HOPE THAT YOU
WILL BE ABLE TO VISIT SPAIN AND YOU CAN BE SURE THAT WE
WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE THE VISIT USEFUL.

8. WARMEST REGARDS. STABLER

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